

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

The first year of a child's school career is extremely important. In this year, a child forms many opinions and attitudes that may influence the rest of their school years. Research indicates that the early years set the stage for children's successes. For this reason, Burlington School District urges caution when considering early admission. It is the position of the District that in most cases, a child should not be enrolled in kindergarten until they reach five years of age by September 1st of the enrolling year. The standards to approve early admission are high. This is to ensure that children who are approved to enter kindergarten before the age of five are among the most mature and prepared for long-term academic and social success.

Vermont school districts are not obligated by law to allow students early entrance. However, in an attempt to meet the needs of individual children, as a service, Burlington School District will consider early entrance requests for students whose birth dates fall between September 1st and September 30th, if requested. Such evaluation is consistent with Policy F 14: Entrance Age.

To be considered for early entrance, children:

- Must satisfy the State defined and District defined residency requirements. Proof of residency may be required.
- Must be five years of age between September 1st and September 30th of the school year in consideration.

Process:

1. A parent seeking early entrance consideration for their child must fully complete the attached request form and the New Student Registration online form. Supporting documentation that accompanies the form may be considered.
2. The standard deadline for submission of the forms is at the close of the kindergarten registration period for the year under consideration. Requests will be considered on a rolling basis. Requests submitted after this date may be considered, but may not be timely for the start of the school year. Requests submitted after June will not be considered until teachers return in the fall and class sizes are known.
3. To assess readiness, a qualitative and quantitative approach will be employed. Play-based screenings and formal/standardized assessment measures may be used. The goal of the assessment will be to measure concept development, communication, motor skills, socio-emotional development, and cognitive skills.
4. Assessment costs are the responsibility of the District.

5. The parent/guardian will be notified by letter of the assessment location(s), date(s), and time(s) for their child. Parent requests for an alternative testing date and time will be considered but cannot be assured.
6. Assessment will not be given to a child who has not yet reached four years and eight months of age.
7. The results of the assessment will be reviewed by a District assessment team, who will provide a recommendation to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will notify the parent of approval or denial of early entrance. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.
8. Approvals are subject to space availability as determined annually. Space must remain available for late registrants of eligible students in each school.
9. While parent preferences will be considered, space availability will dictate the school of enrollment. Resident students who reach the age of five by September 1st will be placed prior to the consideration of early entrance applications.

Assessment Criteria:

- The District will assign qualified individuals to conduct assessments. The purpose of the assessment is to look at the following domains: concept development, communication, motor skills, socio-emotional development, and cognitive skills.
- Qualitative and quantitative measures will be used, as determined appropriate by the assessment team, and will include observation in natural settings.
- If a child is in a preschool or child care program, the District may request a confidential letter of recommendation.

As noted above, this process sets a very high bar for entrance age exemptions. It is anticipated that early entrance is the exception and not the norm. Parent caution should be exercised when relaying any expectations to the child about this process.

The required assessments may be stressful to some children. Parents are encouraged to exercise discretion in whether or not to request consideration for early entrance.



Policy F 14: Entrance Age
Request for Kindergarten Early Entrance Consideration

Please read the procedures before completing this request.

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____

(Note: The child will only be considered if their 5th birthday falls between Sept. 1st and 30th, as evidenced by the birth record.)

Parent/Guardian Name(s):

Parent/Guardian Address:

Parent/Guardian Phone Number(s):

Parent/Guardian Email:

Child's Preschool Program:

Program Phone Number: _____

Days in Attendance: Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Times in Attendance: _____

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Please attach the following:

- * (Required) Parent/Guardian statement addressing “Why it is advantageous for my child to start kindergarten early and why I think the experience will be a successful one.”
- * (Optional) Other’s statement addressing “Why I think it is advantageous for this child to start kindergarten early, and why I think the experience will be a successful one.”

____ I certify that the above information is accurate and that I will present proof of age or residency if requested. I further authorize the release of educational records or recommendations from any providers if requested by the District for the sole purpose of making an assessment on this request, unless expressly named below. My signature authorizes the District to schedule and undertake a play-based formative assessment. To assess readiness, a qualitative and quantitative approach will be employed. Play-based screenings and formal/standardized assessment measures may be used. The goal of the assessment will be to measure concept development, communication, motor skills, socio-emotional development, and cognitive skills. I have read the attached procedures and have had the opportunity to have any questions answered. I understand the determination of the Superintendent upon recommendation of the assessment team is final.

____ I do ____ I do not permit the release of educational records or recommendations from the following individuals or agencies (*limiting my permission may affect the District’s ability to assess my child*):

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Completed applications received by the deadline noted in the procedures will be considered in time for the coming school year. Please send this form with supporting materials to:

Burlington School District
Attn: Early Education
150 Colchester Ave
Burlington, VT 05401
802-864-8463x1